

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

1. Allowable Subject Matter – claims 24, 25, and 27

The Examiner objected to claims 24, 25, and 27 as being dependent on a rejected base claim, but stated that the claims would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claims 24 and 27 have been rewritten in independent form including all the limitations of the base claims and intervening claims. Claim 25 depends from allowable claim 24. Consequently, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 24, 25, and 27 are now in condition for allowance.

2. Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) – claims 22, 23, 26, 28, and 29

The Examiner rejected claims 22, 23, 26, 28, and 29 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Rutherford in view of Horniak *et al.* Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection. As presented in Section 1 of this response, claim 24 should now be in condition for allowance since it has been amended as requested by the Examiner. Claims 22 and 26 have been canceled, thereby rendering the rejection moot with regard to claims 22 and 26.

Applicants note that amended claims 23, 28 and 29 depend directly from allowable independent claim 24. In light of the arguments submitted in Sections 1 and 2 of this response, Applicants respectfully submit that dependent claims 23, 28, and 29 are not obvious in view of the combination of Rutherford and Horniak *et al.* because these references, either alone or in combination, fail to teach or suggest all the claimed limitations. Moreover, these dependent claims further recite and define the claimed invention, and thus, are independently patentable. In conclusion, Applicants respectfully submit that the 35 U.S.C. §103(a) rejection of claims 23, 28, and 29 has been overcome.

3. Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) – claims 30-34

The Examiner rejected claims 30-34 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Rutherford in view of Horniak. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection. Claims 31-34 have been canceled, thereby rendering this rejection moot with regard to claims 31-34.

Independent claim 30 has been amended to include the following subject matter that has been designated as allowable by the Examiner, consistent with allowable claim 24:

wherein the one of the plurality of pieces of media further comprises a third bridge of connecting material between the first and second bridges of connecting material, wherein the tear bar further comprises a roughened center portion between the first and second side portions, the center portion of the tear bar being adapted to abut the surface of the one of the plurality of pieces of media in close relative proximity to the third bridge of connecting material and apply resistance on the one of the plurality of pieces of media when a longitudinal force is applied to the one of the plurality of pieces of media.

Therefore, claim 30 now includes all the allowable subject matter of claim 24. As such, claim 30 should be in condition for allowance. In conclusion, Applicants respectfully submit that the 35 U.S.C. §103(a) rejection of claim 30 has been overcome.

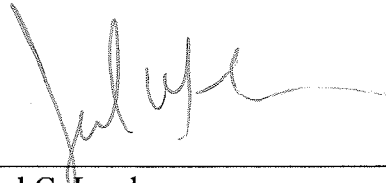
CONCLUSION

Applicants have made an earnest and *bona fide* effort to clarify the issues before the Examiner and to place this case in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and allowance of all of claims 23-25 and 27-30 is believed to be in order, and a timely Notice of Allowance to this effect is respectfully requested.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fee(s) or underpayment of fee(s) under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 and 1.17, or to credit any overpayments, to Deposit Account No. 194293, Deposit Account Name STEPTOE & JOHNSON LLP.

Should the Examiner have any questions concerning the foregoing, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned attorney at (310) 734-3200. The undersigned attorney can normally be reached Monday through Friday from about 9:00 AM to 6:00 PM Pacific Time.

Respectfully submitted,



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